What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus (10) for use with a UE device (12) equipped for wireless cellular communication and including a UE user interface (14a), the apparatus characterized in that it comprises:

an interface (10a) with the UE device (12), providing at least part of a wireless or plug connection to the UE device (12), for communicating with the UE device (12); and

a short-range transceiver (10b), coupled to the interface (10a) with the UE device (12), for wirelessly communicating with short-range transceivers of peer devices.

2. The apparatus (10) of claim 1, further characterized in that the UE device (12) also includes an AUX user interface (14b) providing a user interface to the apparatus (10), and also in that the UE user interface (14a) is operative in combination with the AUX user interface application (14b).

3. The apparatus (10) of claim 1, wherein the short-range transceiver (10b) is operative according to the BlueTooth protocol or a comparable short-range radio-wave based protocol.

4. The apparatus (10) of claim 1, wherein the interface (10a) with the UE device (12) is coupled to the UE device using communication according to the BlueTooth protocol or other radiofrequency-based coupling protocol, or using an infrared-based coupling technology.

5. The apparatus (10) of claim 1, wherein the short-range transceiver (10b) of the apparatus (10) is operative according to a predetermined protocol and has a range at least several multiples of the range usual for a short-range transceiver operative according to the predetermined protocol.

6. The apparatus (10) of claim 1, wherein the UE device (12) includes an annunciator (17a-c), and wherein the apparatus (10) is further characterized in that it further comprises:

a buddy detector application (10a-2), coupled to the short-range transceiver (10b), for receiving information including an identifier indicating a peer device or a user associated with a peer device, and in response providing to the annunciator (17a-c) a control signal actuating the annunciator (17a-c), depending on the identifier; and

a buddy list (16), for holding a list of buddies, with the list organized as records (21) so as to be able to retrieve a record for a peer device or a user associated with a peer device based on the identifier associated with the peer device or a user associated with a peer device;

wherein the buddy detector checks the buddy list (16) for a record having the identifier included in the received information and actuates the annunciator (17a-c) only upon finding such a record.

7. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the identifier is an identifier of a short-range transceiver associated with the predetermined buddy.

8. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the buddy identifier is a nickname of the predetermined buddy.

9. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the buddy detector application (10a) provides to the UE device (12) information indicating the predetermined buddy for display to a user via the user interface (15a) of the UE device (12).

10. The apparatus (10) of claim 1, wherein the short-range transceiver (10b) is operative according to a predetermined protocol and has a greater range than is usual for a short-range

transceiver operative according to the predetermined protocol, and wherein the apparatus (10) is further characterized in that it further comprises:

a store and forward service application (18), for receiving communications via the short-range transceiver (10b), for determining whether the communications have as an intended recipient a device peer to the apparatus (10) but other than the apparatus (10), and for retransmitting any such communications via the short-range transceiver (10b) and including in the retransmission an identifier indicating a user of the apparatus (10), thereby providing to peer devices an increased-range short-range communication facility and allowing the user to take credit for providing the facility.

11. The apparatus (10) of claim 1, further characterized in that it further comprises:

a controller (10a-2) adapted to receive from another device a request for permission to control a stimulus generator (19a-b), to present the request to a user via the UE user interface (14a), to signal the user response to the request, to receive command signals indicating commands to cause one or another of various available stimuli sensations, and to provide stimulus control signals corresponding to the received command signals; and

the stimulus generator (19a-b), responsive to the stimulus control signals, for generating stimulus sensations corresponding to the stimulus control signals.

12. The apparatus (10) of claim 11, wherein the stimulus generator (19a-b) emits light of a color indicated by the stimulus control signal.

13. The apparatus (10) of claim 11, wherein the stimulus generator (19a-b) emits sound indicated by the stimulus control

signal.

14. The apparatus (10) of claim 1, further characterized in that it further comprises:

a personal web page administrator (10a), responsive to signals from the short-range transceiver (10b) indicating the nearby presence of another short-range transceiver, for exchanging signals with a user of the UE device (12) to determine whether to send a personal web page to the other short-range transceiver and for sending a web page to the other short-range transceiver; and

a web page data store (13a) holding the personal web page.

15. The apparatus (10) of claim 1, further characterized in that it further comprises:

a phone list data store (13b) holding a list of phone numbers organized as records (31) indexed based on a nickname identifier, for providing a phone number from the phone list data store (13b) in a guarded signal;

and wherein the UE device (12) also hosts an AUX agent (14b) of the apparatus (10), the AUX agent (14b) responsive to the guarded signal, for causing the phone number to be dialed by the UE device (12) without revealing the phone number to the UE user interface (14a), thereby keeping the phone number secret from a user of the UE device (12).

16. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the AUX agent (14b) is adapted so that the phone number is called only for sending an SMS message or other message, and not for enabling voice communication.

17. A system, comprising a telecommunications network including

a radio access network, and further comprising a UE device (12), characterized in that the UE device (12) is provided in combination with an apparatus (10) as in claim 1.

18. A method for use by a UE device (12) equipped for wirelessly communicating according to a cellular communication protocol, the method for use in also wirelessly communicating with a peer device according to a short-range wireless communication protocol, the method characterized in that it comprises:

a step (101 106) in which the UE device (12) interfaces with a user to display messages communicated according to the short-range wireless communication protocol or to accept messages for communication according to the short-range wireless communication protocol, the interfacing with the user being via a AUX user interface (14b) providing a user interface to an external auxiliary device (10) coupled to the UE device (12) via a coupling arrangement (10a 12a); and

a step (102 105) in which the UE device (12) provides to the auxiliary device (10) the messages received from the user for communication according to the short-range wireless communication protocol via a short-range transceiver (10b) included as part of the auxiliary device (10), or in which the UE device (12) receives from the auxiliary device (10) the messages received via the short-range transceiver (10b) for display to the user.

19. The method of claim 18, further characterized in that the AUX user interface (14b) is operative in combination with a UE user interface (14a) providing a user interface to the UE device (12).

20. The method of claim 18, wherein the short-range transceiver (10b) is operative according to the BlueTooth protocol or a comparable short-range radio-wave based protocol.

21. The method of claim 18, wherein the interface (10a) with the UE device (12) is coupled to the UE device using communication according to the BlueTooth protocol or other radiofrequency-based coupling protocol, or using an infrared-based coupling technology.

22. The method of claim 18, wherein the short-range transceiver (10b) of the apparatus (10) is operative according to a predetermined protocol and has a range at least several multiples of the range usual for a short-range transceiver operative according to the predetermined protocol.

23. The method of claim 18, wherein the UE device (12) includes an annunciator (17a-c), and wherein the method is further characterized in that it further comprises:

a step (43) in which a buddy detector application (10a), coupled to the short-range transceiver (10b), receives via the short-range transceiver (10b) information indicating a peer device based on an identifier included in the information;

a step (44 45) in which the buddy detector application (10a) checks a buddy list (16), used for holding a list of buddies with the list organized as records (21) so as to be able to retrieve a record based on the identifier, and determines whether the identifier of the peer device indicates a buddy in the buddy list (16) and if so, provides to the annunciator (17a-c) a control signal actuating the annunciator(17a-c).

24. The method of claim 23, wherein the identifier is an identifier of a short-range transceiver included as part of the peer device.

25. The method claim 23, wherein the identifier is a nickname of a user associated with the peer device.

26. The method of claim 23, further comprising a step (47) in which the buddy detector application (10a) provides to the UE device (12) the buddy indicated by the identifier, for display to a user via the user interface (15a) of the UE device (12).

27. The method of claim 18, wherein the short-range transceiver (10b) is operative according to a predetermined protocol and has a greater range than is usual for a short-range transceiver operative according to the predetermined protocol, and wherein the method is further characterized in that it further comprises:

a step (71 72) in which a store and forward service application (18) hosted by the auxiliary device (10) receives communications via the short-range transceiver (10b) and determines whether the communications have as an intended recipient a device peer to the auxiliary device (10) but other than the auxiliary device (10); and

a step (73) in which the store and forward service application (18) retransmits any such communications via the short-range transceiver (10b) and including in the retransmission an identifier indicating a user of the auxiliary device (10), thereby providing to peer devices an increased-range short-range communication facility and allowing the user to take credit for providing the facility.

28. The method of claim 18, further characterized in that it further comprises:

a step (53) in which a controller (10a) hosted by the auxiliary device (10 receives from a peer device via the short-range transceiver (10b) stimulus control signals indicating commands to cause one or another of various available stimuli sensations; and

a step (54) in which the controller (10a) provides the stimulus control signals to a stimulus generator (19a-b) for generating stimuli sensations corresponding to the stimulus control signals.

29. The method of claim 28, wherein the stimulus generator emits light of a color indicated by the stimulus control signal.

30. The method of claim 28, wherein the stimulus generator emits sound indicated by the stimulus control signal.

31. The method of claim 18, further characterized in that it further comprises:

a step (61) in which a personal web page administrator (10a) receives signals via the short-range transceiver (10b) indicating the nearby presence of another short-range transceiver (10b); and

a step (62) in which the personal web page administrator (10a) uses the short-range transceiver (10b) to send the personal web page to the other short-range transceiver.

32. The method of claim 18, further characterized in that it further comprises:

a step (64) in which the auxiliary device (10) adds a phone number to a phone list data store (13b) holding a list of phones organized as records (31) indexed based on a nickname identifier;

a step (65) in which the auxiliary device (10) provides to an AUX component (14b) hosted by the UE device (12) a phone number to call via the cellular communication network, along with an associated nickname; and

a step (66) in which the AUX component (14b) places the call while displaying to a user of UE device (12) the nickname but not the number being called.

33. The method of claim 32, wherein the AUX agent (14b) is adapted so that the phone number is called only for sending an SMS message or other message, and not for enabling voice communication.

34. A computer program product comprising: a computer readable storage structure embodying computer program code thereon for execution by a computer processor in equipment (11) comprising a UE device (11) coupled to an AUX device (10), with said computer program code characterized in that it includes instructions for performing the steps of the method of claim 18.